

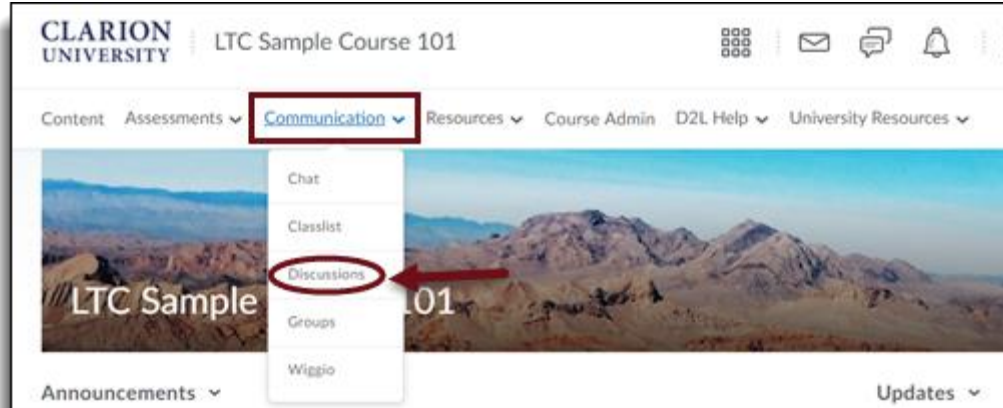
Discussions

You can use the Discussions tool to encourage conversation between students and instructors online. The D2L Discussions tool is a course message board consisting of **forums** and **topics**. **Forums** are used to organize the Discussion area such as by Week, group, or topic and are the main folder where discussion topics reside. Students cannot post to forums. **Topics** are the areas the students can post to, and which faculty can assess. Threads are postings within a topic.

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Accessing Discussions

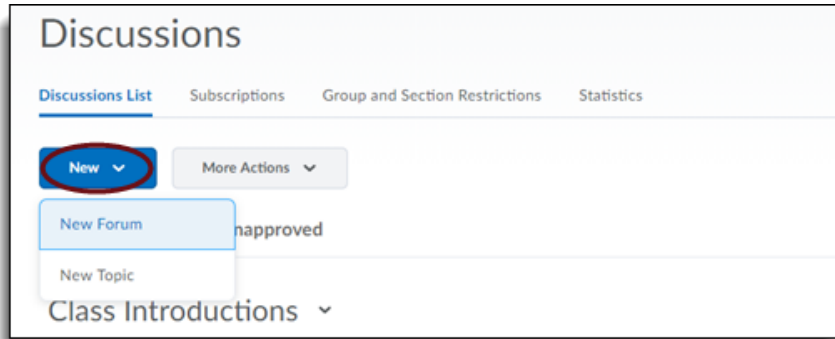
1. Select **Communication** menu on the navigation bar
2. Click on **Discussions**



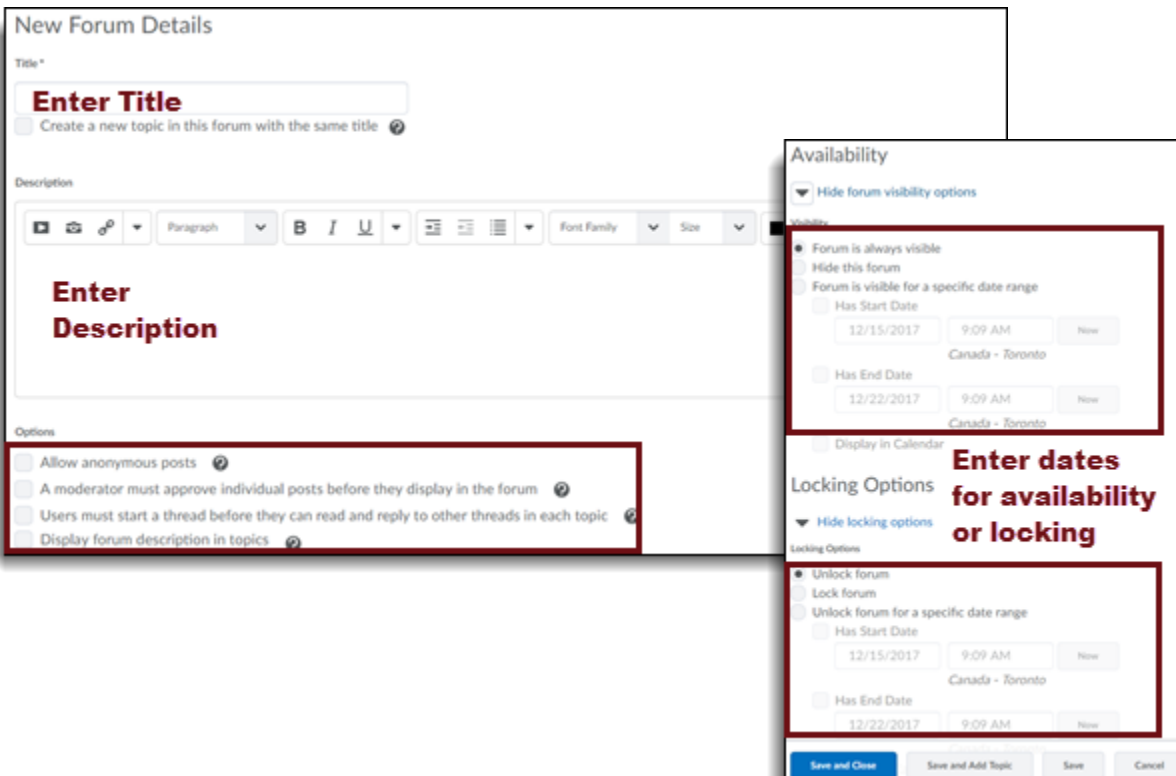
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Creating a New Forum

1. Select the New button to create a Forum or Topic as desired.



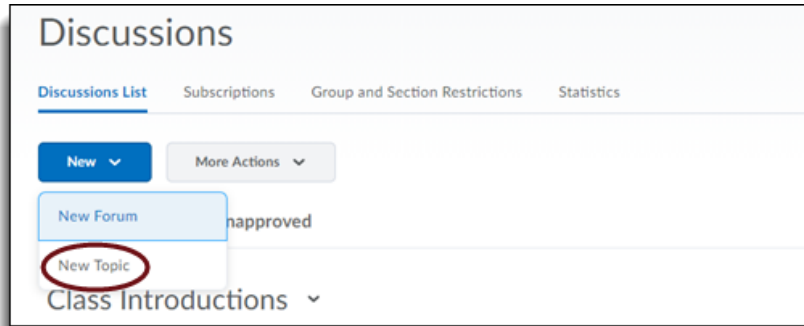
2. Provide a title and pertinent restrictions if choosing a forum.
3. In the Options section:
 - a. Select the **“Allow anonymous posts”** check box to enable anonymous posting to the topic.
 - i. Note you cannot evaluate anonymous posts.
 - b. Select the **“A moderator must approve individual posts before they display in the forum”** check box to require moderators approve posts before they appear in the topic.
 - c. Select the **“Users must start a thread before they can read and reply to other threads”** check box if you want users to start a thread before they can read and respond to other threads in the topic.



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Creating a Topic

1. Select the New button and click New Topic



2. Create your topic by adding a name and all other pertinent restrictions
3. In the options section:
 - a. Select the **“Allow anonymous posts”** check box to enable anonymous posting to the topic.
 - i. * Note you cannot evaluate anonymous posts.
 - b. Select the **“A moderator must approve individual posts before they display in the forum”** check box to require moderators approve posts before they appear in the topic.
 - c. Select the **“Users must start a thread before they can read and reply to other threads”** check box if you want users to start a thread before they can read and respond to other threads

 A screenshot of the 'New Topic Details' form. The form is divided into several sections:

- Forum:** A dropdown menu with '-- Choose a Forum --' and a '[New Forum]' button. A red box highlights this area with the text: **Choose Forum to include the topic under or create a new Forum**.
- Title:** A text input field with the placeholder text 'Enter a Title'. A red box highlights this field.
- Description:** A rich text editor with a toolbar and a text area with the placeholder text 'Enter a Description'. A red box highlights this area.
- Options:** A section with three checkboxes:
 - Allow anonymous posts
 - A moderator must approve individual posts before they display in the topic
 - Users must start a thread before they can read and reply to other threads
 A red box highlights this entire section.
- Availability:** A section titled 'Availability' with a dropdown for 'Rate Posts' set to 'No Ratings'. It includes 'Hide topic visibility options' and three radio button options:
 - Topic is always visible
 - Hide this topic
 - Topic is visible for a specific date range
 The date range options include 'Has Start Date' and 'Has End Date' with input fields and 'Now' buttons. A red box highlights this section with the text: **Enter availability or locking dates**.
- Locking Options:** A section titled 'Locking Options' with a dropdown for 'Hide locking options' and three radio button options:
 - Unlock topic
 - Lock topic
 - Unlock topic for a specific date range
 Similar to the availability section, it includes date range options. A red box highlights this section.

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4. Under the assessments tab, you can choose to associate the topic with a grade item.
5. If you want to assess individual posts (rather than assigning an overall topic score directly for each user):
 - a. Select the **Allow assessment of individual posts** check box.
 - b. Select the Calculation method you want to use to determine users' overall topic scores based on post scores.
 - c. By default, the system ignores unassessed posts when calculating the topic score. However, if you want the calculation to treat unassessed posts as if those posts receive a score of zero, select the **Include unassessed posts in the calculated score as zero** check box.

The screenshot shows the 'Assessment' tab in a software interface. The 'Assessment' tab is highlighted with a red box. The 'Grade Item' dropdown menu is also highlighted with a red box, with a red arrow pointing to it and the text: 'Choose the Grade Item you would like to associate with the discussion or create a new one.' Below this, the 'Score Out Of' input field is highlighted with a red box and a red arrow, with the text: 'Enter a score for the discussion'. In the 'Posts' section, the 'Allow assessment of individual posts' checkbox is highlighted with a red box and a red arrow, with the text: 'Select this check box to assess individual posts'. In the 'Calculation' section, the 'Include unassessed posts in the calculated topic score as zero' checkbox is highlighted with a red box and a red arrow, with the text: 'Use the drop-down menu to select how you would like to grade'. The 'Calculation' dropdown menu is also highlighted with a red box.

6. Make sure to click save when you are finished.

Reordering a Forum or Topic

1. From the discussions page, click the More Actions button.
2. Select Reorder from the list
3. On the Reorder page, sort the forums and topics using the dropdown boxes
4. Click Save

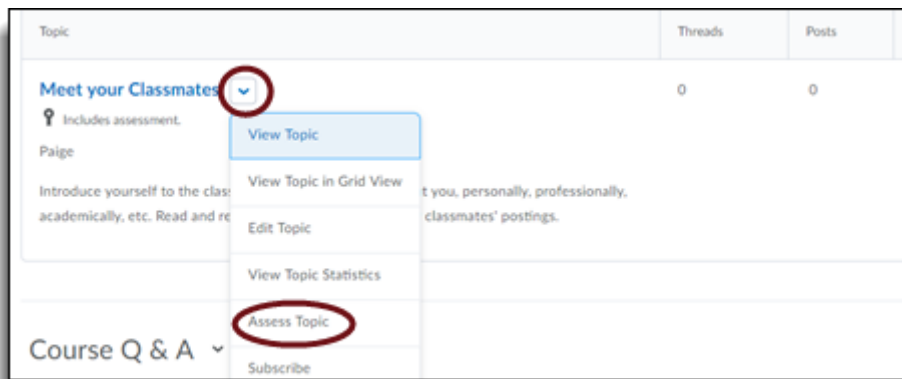
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Deleting a Forum or Topic

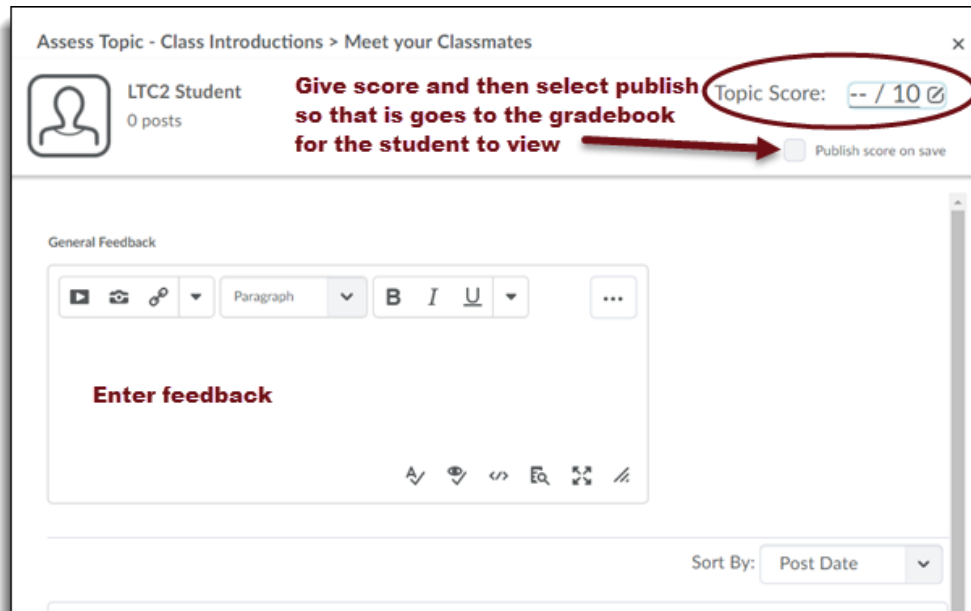
1. From the discussions page, click the More Actions button
2. Select Delete from the list
3. On the Delete page, select the forums or topics you wish to delete
4. Click the Delete button
5. Click Save

Assessing a Topic

1. Once you have associated a Grade item to a topic, you can select “Assess topic” from the options menu.



2. In the Assessment view, you can read all contributions to a topic by a specific student.
3. Enter the score and place a check in the box next to “Published” to send the score to the gradebook.
4. Enter feedback as desired.
5. Save and close.

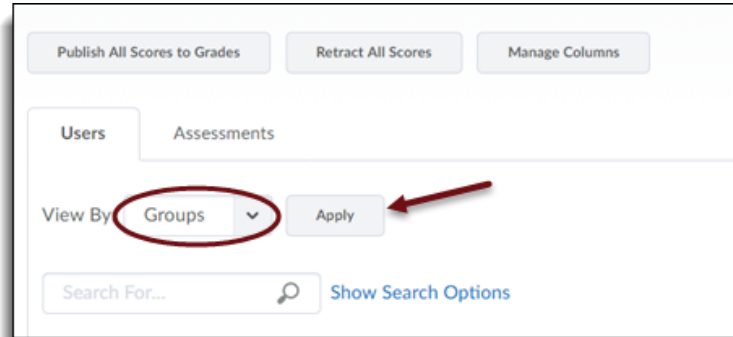


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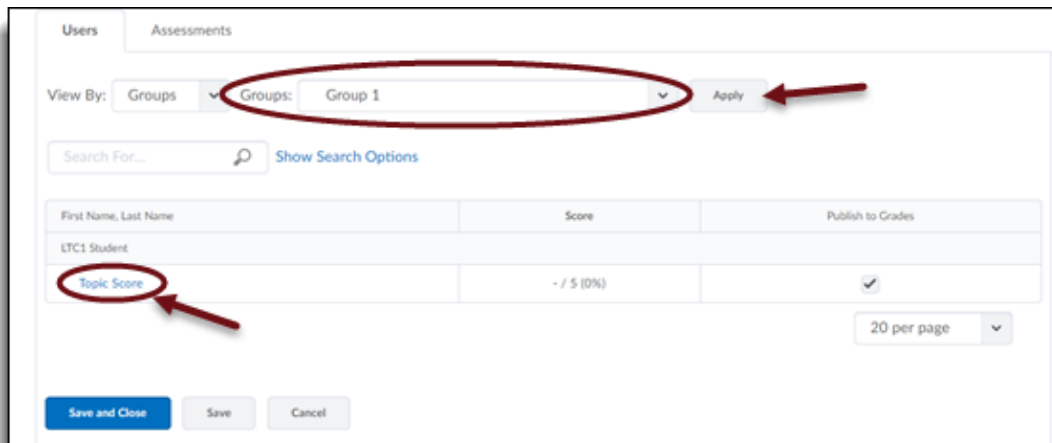
Assessing Group Discussion Topics

When assessing a group topic, you are able to filter your discussions by group. This makes it easier to determine which groups and users posted what.

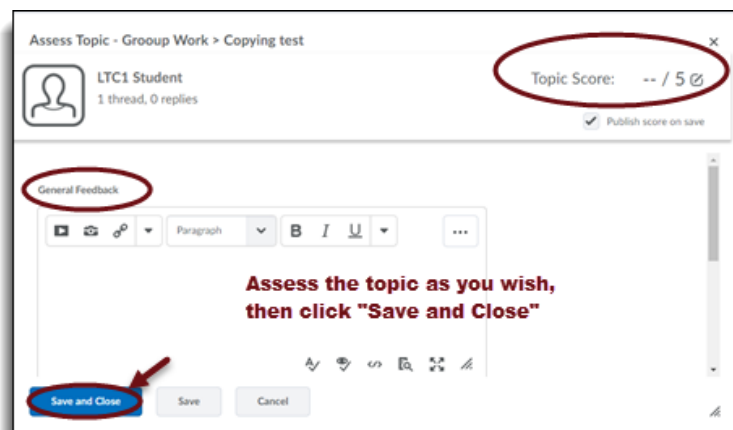
1. Click the dropdown arrow beside the topic and select Assess Topic
2. In the assessment view, change the filter from “Users” to “Groups” and select Apply



3. Find the group you would like to view posts from using the drop-down menu, then select Apply
4. Click on the blue Topic Score link to view the posts



5. Assess the topics as you wish with the grade and feedback
6. Click Save and Close when finished

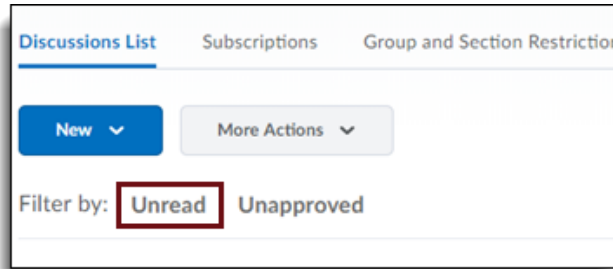


7. Continue to filter to the next group as you grade
8. Click Save and Close when finished

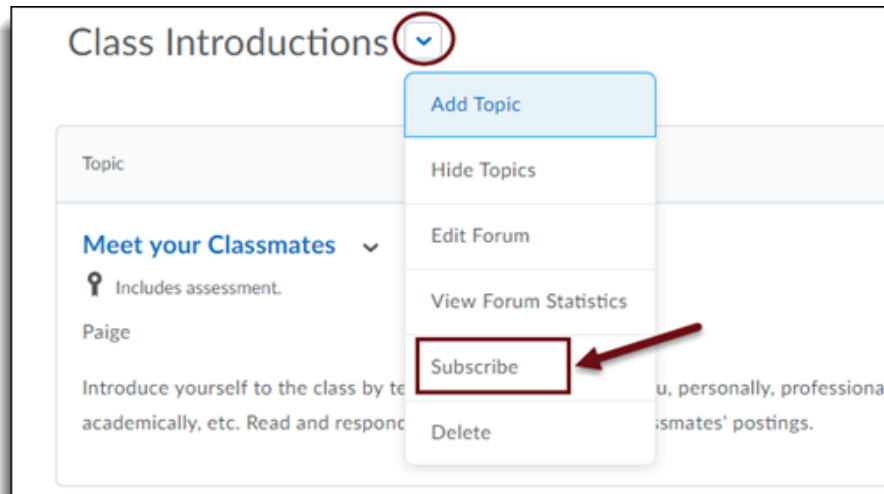
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Accessing Discussion Posts

1. Access the discussions page through the Communications tab > Discussions in the navbar
2. Once a discussion gets going, new posts can come in very quickly. There are a number of places in Learning Environment that identify new posts to help you keep on top of things:
 - a. The updates widget on your homepage can show you the number of unread discussion posts there are, if it is enabled.
 - b. The number of unread posts appears beneath each topic in the Discussions List. To see only topics with unread posts, click Unread in the Filter by tool navigation.



- c. Unread posts appear bolded while in the Discussions tab.
- d. You can also subscribe to a thread, forum, or topic to receive alerts when unread posts are available.

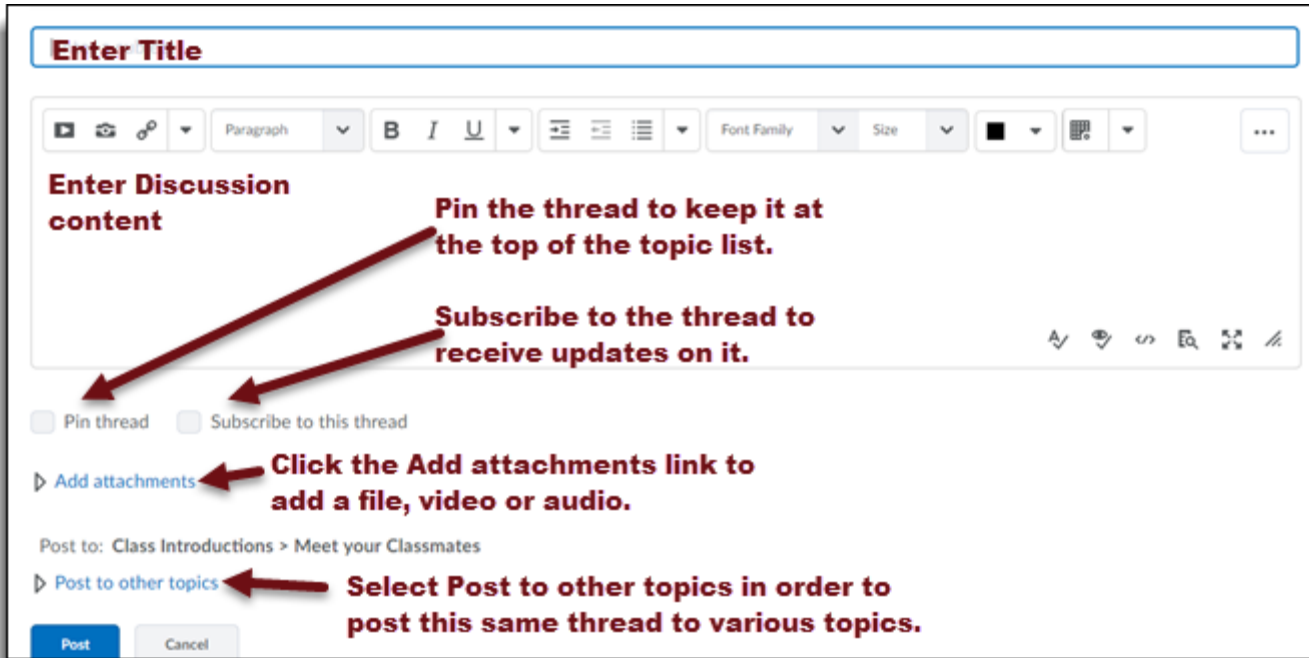


3. In order to read a topic, first click on the topic that you want to read posts from, and then click on the thread to open all replies and the original post.

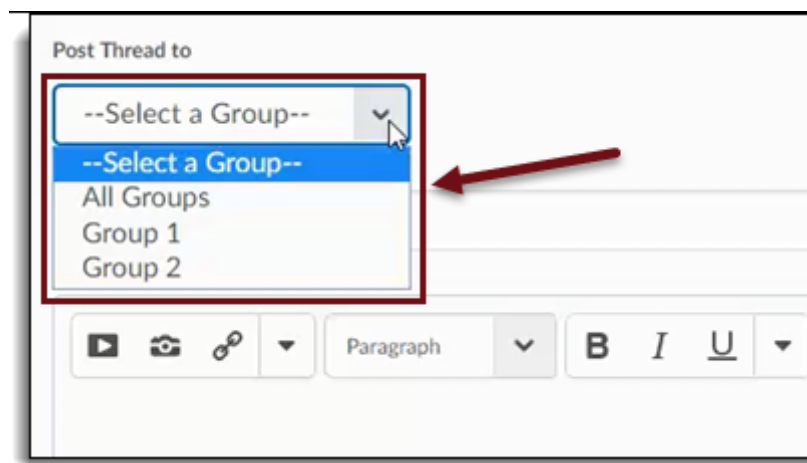
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Creating a Discussion Post

1. Click on the topic where you want to create a thread.
2. Click Start a New Thread.
3. Enter a Subject.
4. Enter your Post.
5. Set any other posting options you want.



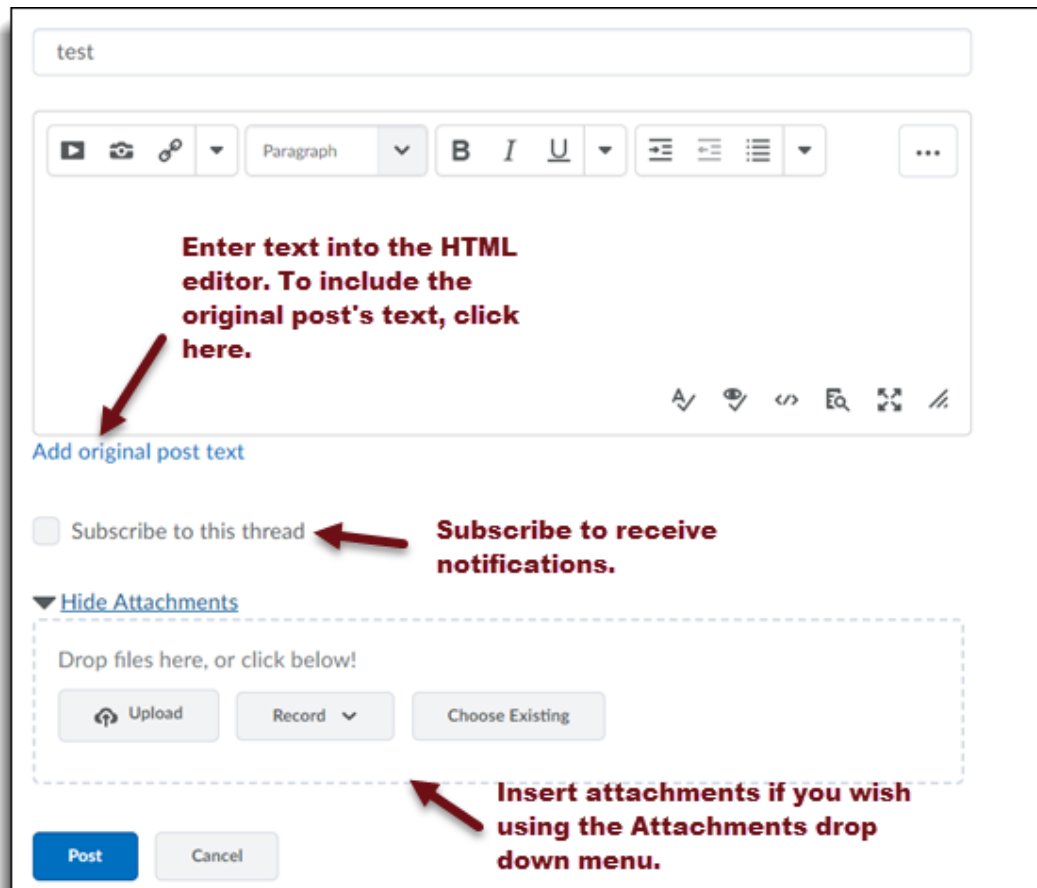
6. To post a thread to multiple Group Discussion Boards at once, click on the group topic, then select the drop-down menu and select an individual group or the All Groups option.



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Replying to a Discussion Post

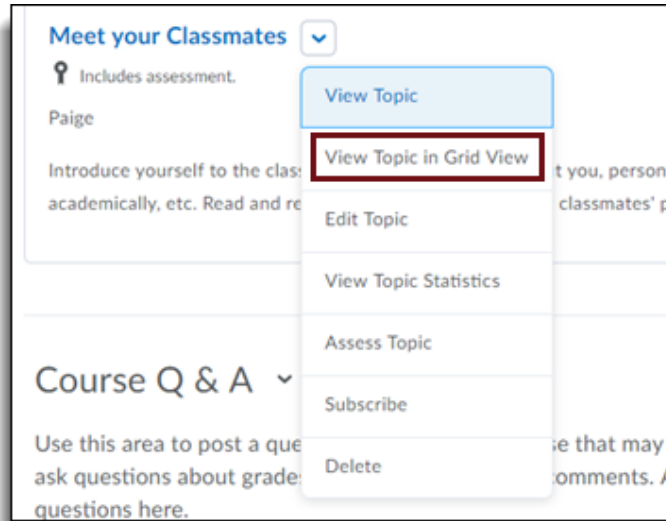
1. To reply to a topic or thread, locate the thread you want to reply to.
2. Click Reply to Thread to reply to the main thread post or click Reply to reply to a particular post inside the thread.
3. Enter your reply in the HTML Editor. To include the original post's text in your reply, click the Add original post text link.
4. Set any other options you want.



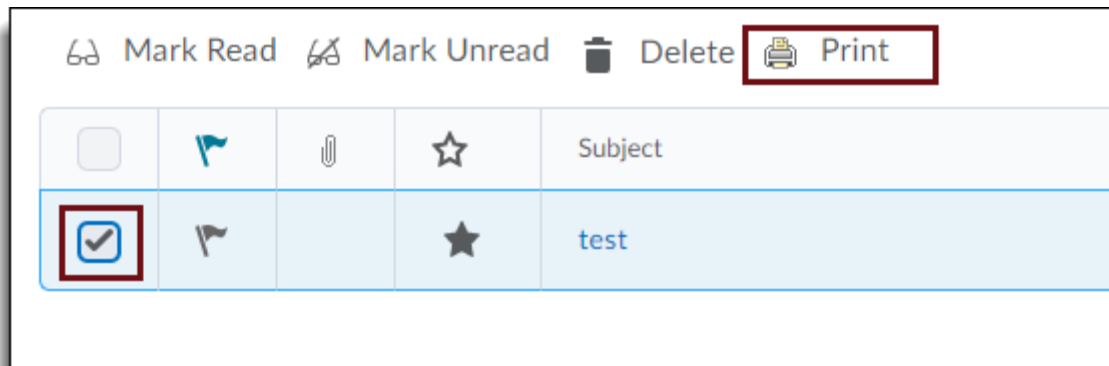
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Printing Discussions

1. Select **Communication** on the navigation bar and then click on **Discussions**.
2. From the discussions list, click the contextual menu next to the topic name
3. Choose **“View topic in Grid View”**



4. In grid view, select one or more threads from the list and click print.



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